

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2294

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 2158

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RO, IV

SUBJECT: CEAUSESCU VISIT TO IVORY COAST

REF: (A) ABIDJAN 1594(NOTAL), (B) BUCHAREST 1090

BEGIN SUMMARY: ROMANIAN PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU PAID 3-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY COAST FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 2. GOIC ACCORDED WARM WELCOME TO ITS FIRST COMMUNIST CHIEF OF STATE VISITOR. VISIT CONCLUDED WITH AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH JOINT ROMANIAN-IVORIAN COMMISSION AND TO INCREASE COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC, TECHNICAL AND OTHER FIELDS. CONTINUED IVORIAN WARINESS WAS EVIDENT HOWEVER IN NEGOTIATIONS OVER JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND FACT NO ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE TO OPEN IVORIAN EMBASSY IN ROMANIA AS HAD BEEN SPECULATED. END SUMMARY.

1. CEAUSESCU VISIT WAS PRECEDED BY SATURATION COVERAGE IN IVORIAN MEDIA OF ROMANIA, PORTRAYED AS A THIRD-WORLD
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AND DEVELOPING COUNTRY WHICH HAD MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD INDUSTRIALIZATON. THE GOIC FOR ITS PART EXHORTED THE POPULATION TO TURN OUT IN A WARM WELCOME OF CEAUSESCU "NOTWITHSTANDING THE FACT THAT IVORY COAST WAS NEITHER SOCIALIST NOR COMMUNIST " IN ORIENTATION.

2. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RATHER LIGHTLY-SCHEDULED THREE-DAY VISIT INCLUDED A DINNER OFFERED BY HOUPHOUET, LUNCH HOSTED BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT (AND CONSTITUTIONAL SUCCESSOR) PHILIPPE YACE, AND VISITS TO SEVERAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. THE LAST DAY OF THE VISIT THE PARTY TRAVELLED TO HOUPHOUET'S HOME-TOWN OF YAMO USSOUKRO WHERE PARALLEL MEETINGS WERE HELD AT THE CHIEF OF STATE AND EXPERTS LEVEL.

3. DURING TOASTS AND OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS CEAUSESCU PLAYED THEME OF SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ROMANIA AND IVORY COAST IN THAT BOTH HAD HISTORY OF FOREIGN DOMINATION, WERE NOW PLACING PRIMARY EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FOLLOWED POLICY OF OPENNESS TO ALL COUNTRIES REGARDLESS OF DIFFERENT INTERNAL REGIMES. HOUPHOUET SOUNDED A SIMILAR NOTE: "WE HAVE THE SAME OBJECTIVES (PEACE, LIBERTY, DEVELOPMENT, ETC.) THOUGH OUR CHOSEN PATHS ARE DIFFERENT."

4. LENGTHY COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF VISIT ANNOUNCED THAT ACCORDS HAD BEEN SIGNED CREATING JOINT ROMANIAN-IVORIAN COMMISSION TO INCREASE COOPERATION IN THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, TECHNICAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL FIELDS. "CONCRETE ACTION" WAS AGREED UPON IN SECTORS OF MINING, GEOLOGY, ENERGY, FORESTS, AGRICULTURE AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. ON GEO-ECONOMIC MATTERS, THE COMMUNIQUE CALLED FOR A SUMMIT MEETING OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES UNDER GROUP OF 77 AUSPICES TO DISCUSS WAYS TO BRING ABOUT A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER. ON THE CONFIDENTIAL

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POIITL CAL FRONT, THE COMMUNIQUE CALLED FOR GENERAL DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING NUCLEAR, AND HALT TO NUCLEAR ARMS PRODUCTION "BY BUDGET REDUCTION." EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON ON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, THE INVIO LABILITY OF BORDERS AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND THE RENUNCIATION OF THE USE OF FORCE AS A MEANS OF SETTling DISPUTES. ON AFRICA THE TWO PRESIDENTS SUPPORTED THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE TO INDEPENDENCE AND CONDEMNED APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, THE COMMUNIQUE CALLED FOR A JUST AND LASTING PEACE BASED ON "PERTINENT" UN RESOLUTIONS.

5. AT CLOSE OF COMMUNIQUE, HOUPHOUET ACCEPTED CEAUSESCU'S INVITATION TO PAY RECIPROCAL VISIT TO ROMANIA AT SOME (UNSPECIFIED) DATE IN THE FUTURE.

6. COPY OF FINAL COMMUNIQUE BEING POUCHED TO BUCHAREST AND DEPARTMENT(AF/W).

7. COMMENT. IVORY COAST ACCORDED A WARM AND CORDIAL WELCOME TO CEAUSESCU, THE FIRST COMMUNIST CHIEF OF STATE TO VISIT THIS COUNTRY. UNTIL RECENTLY ROMANIA HAD THE ONLY RESIDENT COMMUNIST EMBASSY IN ABIDJAN (NOW THERE IS POLAND AS WELL) AND RELATIONS WITH ROMANIA HAVE BEEN MORE ACTIVE THAN THOSE WITH ANY OTHER BLOC COUNTRY WITH EXCHANGES OF COMMERCIAL AND CULTURAL VISITS. THE VISIT CAN THUS BE SEEN AS A CONTINUATION OF THE GRADUAL OPENING TO THE EAST PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, BY WHICH HOUPHOUET IS IMPLENTING HIS STATED PRINCIPLE OF OPENNESS TO ALL COUNTRIES REGARDLESS OF INTERNAL SYSTEMS WHICH RESPECT NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE GOIC AND PARTICULARLY HOUPHOUET HIMSELF ARE FUNDAMENTALLY WARY ABOUT DEALING WITH THE COMMUNISTS. THIS WAS REFLECTED IN THE SCHEDULE WHICH WAS UNUSUALLY LONG ON CEREMONY AND SHORT ON SUBSTANCE (ONE TETE-A-TETE WITH HOUPHOUET THE FINAL CONFIDENTIAL

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AFTERNOON OF THE VISIT). FURTHER, ACCORDING TO AN MFA SOURCE, THERE WAS DIFFICULTY OVER THE COMMUNIQUE WITH THE IVORIANS REMOVING OR SOFTENING SOME OF THE LANGUAGE IN THE PROFFERED ROMANIAN TEXT AS WELL AS RESISTANCE AMONG SOME OF THE IVORIAN EXPERTS TO MOVING AHEAD TOO RAPIDLY ON EXPANDED TECHNICAL COOPERATION. FINALLY, NO ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE, AS HAD BEEN WIDELY SPECULATED, OF OPENING IN BUCHAREST THE FIRST IVORY COAST EMBASSY IN A COMMUNIST COUNTRY. IN SHORT, THE VISIT WAS SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING ITS LIMITED OBJECTIVES OF WIDENING COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION BUT NO RADICAL RESTRUCTURING OF POSITIONS WAS EXPECTED OR OCCURRED. END COMMENT. STEARNS

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